DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 444 431 HE 033 168

AUTHOR Hativa, Nira
TITLE The Tension between Professors' and Students' Perceptions Regarding the Academic Environment.
PUB DATE 2000-00-00
NOTE 44p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; *Academic Persistence; College Faculty; *Educational Environment; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Law Schools; *Law Students; Legal Education (Professions); School Holding Power; *Student Alienation; Student Attitudes; Student Attrition; Student Behavior; Student Evaluation; Student Responsibility; *Teacher Attitudes; Teacher Responsibility; Teaching Methods; Undergraduate Students
IDENTIFIERS *Israel

ABSTRACT

This study was initiated in response to perceived behavior problems of undergraduate law school students at a research university in Israel. It was found that increasing numbers of students stopped attending classes on a regular basis, were not reading assigned materials, avoided participating in discussions, studied only superficially for exams, and were reluctant to study theory, preferring to concentrate on practice. Interviews and questionnaires completed by a representative sample of faculty and students attempted to identify similarities and differences between professors' and students' thinking about and perceptions of goals in teaching, the responsibility for student learning, and problems in the teaching/learning/student assessment situation. The study identified major gaps between faculty and student perceptions concerning all aspects of the academic environment. A dividing issue is faculty emphasis on theory in teaching as opposed to students' wish for a more practical orientation. Views also diverge on who is responsible for students' failure to learn. While faculty perceive themselves as satisfactory teachers, students are highly critical of faculty's teaching, with students criticizing faculty's information-transmission approach to teaching despite students' preference for a more student-centered orientation. These findings are compared to similar observations made at a U.S. law school. Four data tables are appended. (Contains 53 references.) (CH)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 444 431

The Tension Between Professors' and Students' Perceptions Regarding the Academic Environment

Nira Hativa, Tel Aviv University

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

N Hativa

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

HE033168

The Tension Between Professors' and Students' Perceptions Regarding the Academic Environment

Nira Hativa, Tel Aviv University

Abstract

This study used interviews and questionnaires given to a representative sample of faculty and students in undergraduate courses of a law school in Israel, to identify similarities and differences between professors' and students' thinking about and perceptions of goals in teaching, the responsibility for student learning, and problems in the teaching/learning/student-assessment situation. The study identifies major gaps between faculty and students' perceptions and reveals tension between both parties' expectations and goals concerning all aspects of the academic environment. A dividing issue is faculty's emphasis on theory in teaching as opposed to students' wish for a more practical orientation. Views also diverge on the responsibility for students' failure in learning, with each putting the blame on the other. While faculty perceive themselves as satisfactory teachers who have sufficient pedagogical knowledge and who apply it well in practice, students are highly critical of faculty's teaching. In students' perception, faculty use the information-transmission approach to teaching while they prefer a more student-centered orientation. This extreme gap between students' and faculty's perceptions brings about to discontent among faculty with problematic student behaviors, and to students' belief that the structure of teaching and methods of assessment lead them to surface study methods and low investment in learning.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

HE033168

Background: A Problematic Situation

This study was initiated in response to an actual problem. For many years, faculty members in a law school at an Israeli research university were frustrated by a gradual decrease in class attendance among the registered students, throughout the three and a half years of undergraduate studies.[1] In the first semester of the first year, mean class attendance across all courses is above 90% of registered students, which drops to 70%-80% in the second semester, and which further drops to respectively 50%- 60% and 30%- 50% in the second and third years. I was invited by the school's dean to diagnose the problem and offer a solution. To start with, I interviewed five teachers and 30 students, chosen at random, about their perceptions of problems in teaching large required classes in the law school.[2]

All teachers interviewed, with no exception, agreed that the following seven problems in student behavior develop gradually, starting in the second semester of the freshman year. An increasing proportion of students:

(a) Stop attending class on a regular basis;

(b) Do not read assigned readings before class;

(c) Want their teachers to literally dictate the material to them during lesson;

(d) Avoid participation in discussions and making mental effort in class;

(e) Do not study steadily throughout the semester but only during the last few weeks before the final exam;

(f) Study only superficially for exams, using as their single source a "summary notebook"[3], and

(g) Are reluctant to study theory and want teaching to concentrate on practice.

The interviewed students' most frequent explanations for this list of problematic behaviors were respectively:

---

[1] In Israel like in all countries except North America, law study is begun at the undergraduate level.

[2] The selection of students for interview sampled ten students—one per aptitude level—for each of the first three years of study. The division into aptitude levels is described in the Context section.

[3] See the Context section.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

(a) There is only a low added value to attending classes, because of ineffective teaching (as discussed in point (i) below). This is the main reason for "voting with one's feet" and omitting these classes;

(b) The overall amount of reading for all concurrent courses is huge and cannot be fully covered. Thus, one needs to make choices.

(c), (d), (e), (f) Investing time and effort in thorough and continuous study is not rewarded—it is unrelated to success in the course. Studying from a good "summary notebook" gives greater advantage (higher grades in tests) than attending all classes and reading all the assignments. This situation lowers students' motivation to invest in learning—to think, participate, read, or attend class. They feel their time is better spent working on a job during the school year and studying solely for the exams.

(g) All teachers in the basic, required courses are academics interested in law theory and research whereas the large majority of the students aim to be practitioners of law. In contrast with students' interests, most teachers go too deeply into theory as if their aim was to prepare academics.

In students' perceptions, the main problems in the settings of required large courses[3] were:

(i) Ineffective teaching methods. Teaching in these classes consisted almost exclusively of strict lecturing with only little discussion or any other way of activating students and their thinking. The dominant teaching approach is "material coverage", that is, teaching a large amount of material at a fast pace and a shallow level of knowledge. Some teachers dictate the material from their notes and introduce no variations in style and method. Altogether, many class presentations are unclear, non-interactive, keep students very passive, of little intellectual challenge, and thus are very boring. These methods are very unsatisfactory the students who are of very high academic ability[4] and aspire to think and be challenges in class.

(ii) Improper procedures for student assessment. Tests are ill designed: the items are often unsuitable in content and level to the material taught in class, and the time

[4] The admission to that school is based on high performance on high school completion grades and on psychometric tests.

allocated for answers is usually insufficient. The test grading procedure rewards shallow and standard answers and punishes creative, original, or thorough answers. It is, moreover, inconsistent and subjective.[3]

(iii) Lack of teacher care and support for students and their learning. Many teachers are indifferent and apathetic to students and their learning needs. They do not encourage, help, or guide students, nor do they show care for them.

(iv) Too much emphasis on theory, too little on practice (as already explained).

(v) Too little openness to a variety of opinions and views. All faculty hold the same political and social views which they communicate throughout their teaching, while leaving no opening at all for other views.

In their interviews, responding to these complaints, faculty argued that:

(i) They taught well enough, and if students would have come to class well prepared, they would have experienced much better teaching— more interactive and intellectually challenging. The assigned reading serves as a basis for debate during the lesson. If students have not read the texts, it is impossible to conduct discussions in class. In addition, the very large class size makes it impossible to activate students effectively. When teachers do try to conduct discussions, a small number of always the same students participates, while many others do not listen. As a result, the class becomes noisy and teachers lose control. To prevent this from happening, they reduce class discussions to a minimum.

(ii) They insist that their tests do examine understanding and independent thinking rather than knowledge, and that they are objectively evaluated.

(iv) They strongly believe that deep understanding of legal theory is necessary not only to academics but to practitioners as well. They complain that under students' pressure, they direct their teaching to practice more than they should.

(iii)(v) They reject the notions that they do not care for students and their learning, that they all share the same political outlook, and that they discourage openness to a variety of opinions and views.

Altogether, interviews revealed enormous tension between both parties' perceptions and beliefs regarding the points (a) through (g), and (i) through (v) above.

that is, regarding teaching, learning, student assessment, and student behaviors. The result was dissatisfaction and disappointment on both sides, with anger and frustration in more extreme cases. For example, faculty were particularly frustrated by students' not doing the required reading work, by their consequent inability to conduct class discussion, and by students' use of "summary notebooks" to prepare for exams. Many of the students interviewed much lamented the lack of intellectual interaction and stimuli in class. They stated that they started university with a strong willingness for serious and deep study, but that the "system" was forcing them to become superficial.

The Aims of This Study

The aim was to determine whether the findings yielded by interviewing a small sample of faculty (16.7% of the teaching faculty at that time) and students (2.5% of the student population in the first three years of undergraduate studies) could be taken to represent the full teacher and student population of the law school.

Murray (1997) suggested that if we want to understand teaching, it is essential to study teachers' thinking and beliefs regarding three issues: their goals in teaching, their approaches to teaching, and their perceptions of their students. This study examined these three issues, along with problems that faculty and students experienced in teaching and learning. Thus, the study attempted to identify:

1. Goals in methods and styles of teaching, developing students, and assessing learning.
2. Perceptions of the responsibility for students' learning.
3. Problems in teaching and learning that relate to the academic environment.

Because the students are the clients of teaching, their thinking and beliefs regarding the same issues were also examined, and matches and mismatches between the two parties are addressed.

Theoretical Background

Teaching has increasingly been described not only in terms of overt action but also of teachers' knowledge, beliefs, perceptions and assumptions regarding the academic environment (Hativa, 1998; Ramsden, 1992; Shulman, 1987). The rationale is the growing recognition that teachers' implicit theories regarding instruction and

students guide their practice (Hughes, 1990). The *academic environment* is defined as the organization of curricula, teaching, and student assessment in a particular school or department (Ramsden, 1979).

On the other hand, research indicates that students' perceptions of teachers and teaching and their subjective experience of the academic environment, rather than this environment in any objective sense, affect their approaches to studying most directly, and these approaches affect, in turn, their learning outcomes such as success in the course tests (Entwistle, 1991; Entwistle & Tait, 1990). Entwistle (1990) suggests that finding out about students' perceptions of and preferences for the academic environment, particularly those related to teaching characteristics, can serve teachers in selecting appropriate instructional strategies and in structuring the academic environment to better adapt to students' needs in learning. It is therefore important to study the students' perception of the academic environment.

Sensitizing students and professors to each other's viewpoint may facilitate communication between these two groups and improve the teaching/learning process. Indeed, one of the top ten learning needs of students was found to be getting information on how to communicate effectively with the professors, for example, regarding their definition of appropriate and inappropriate student behaviors (Amsel & Fichten, 1990).

Faculty's Perceptions Regarding the Academic Environment

The issues discussed here follow the three main aims of this study.

Faculty's Goals in Teaching

Faculty's goals in teaching strongly guide their planning and conducting course and lesson (Dinham & Blake, 1991). From among a small number of studies that examined faculty goals, the following are four that are most relevant to this study.

Cross (1991) asked 2,700 faculty from 33 colleges which one of six teaching roles they considered as primary. The two roles chosen as of the highest importance were: teaching facts and principles, and developing students' higher-order thinking skills. A survey of over 8,000 faculty members teaching in five major institutional categories (Lawrence & et al., 1990) found that the most important instructional goal was the

transmission of facts, principles and theories. Second in importance was the demonstration of intellectual, artistic or scientific process. Thielens (1987), who interviewed 81 professors from a representative sample of US universities, found that all shared the main instructional goal of helping their students to deeply understand the content of the course, at a level that will enable them to properly apply it. In a survey of faculty members in a prestigious US research university (Hativa, 1997), the five out of 21 listed goals faculty perceive as most important were, in decreasing frequency of vote: students' gaining the basic body of knowledge; promoting student ability to apply methods and principles; students' gaining habits of work and thinking typical to the domain; promoting students' independent, objective, and critical thinking, and promoting students' general cognitive skills.

Integration of the four above reported studies, which took place in different types of higher-education institutions, using different research methods, provide consistent evidence that faculty members in colleges and universities share similar goals in instruction. The three most important ones, as identified across these studies[5], are: (a) students' gaining of the basic body of knowledge, that is, the facts, principles, and theories of the course content; (b) developing students' higher-order cognitive skills and their independent and critical thinking; and (c) promoting students' deep understanding of the material taught, that is, their ability to properly apply the new knowledge.[6]

Faculty Approaches to Teaching or Conceptions of the Academic Environment

Several terms have been used with reference to teachers' thinking about teaching, such as orientations, conceptions, perceptions, beliefs, approaches, and intentions. We

---

[5] These are general goals shared by faculty of all academic domains, but disciplinary differences were identified in faculty goals and in their level of importance. (Franklin & Theall, 1992; Hativa, 1997; Lawrence & et al., 1990; Stark & Lattuca, 1994)

[6] In accordance with Perkins (1992; 1998) students' understanding of the material taught is established when they can demonstrate "*understanding performances*"—performing some thinking tasks that are based on the material, such as applying and transferring it to new situations, and solving problems. In this interpretation, Thielen's (1987) most important goal of students' deep understanding the content which

use here Kember's (1997) account of this terminology: *Conceptions* or *beliefs* refer to specific meanings we attach to phenomena which then mediate our response to situations involving those phenomena; *orientation* is taken as a broader level of categorization encompassing two or more conceptions; *teaching approaches* are characterized as having motivational and strategy/cognitive components. To illustrate (Trigwell, Prosser, & Taylor, 1994), for the teaching approach of "information transmission", the motivational component is the teacher's intention that students will directly receive the information about the discipline that he/she transmits. The strategy "is one in which the teacher engages in little or no interaction with the students, and in which the students have little or no responsibility for the teaching-learning situation" (p. 80). Fox (1983) describes two types of conceptions of teaching held by university faculty: one that regards the role of the teacher to be active and that of the student as passive, and those that assume both teacher and students should be active.

In recent years, there is a growing interest in research on faculty approaches to teaching because of the substantial evidence pointing at the influence of these approaches on students' approaches to learning (Entwistle & Tait, 1990; Gow & Kember, 1993; Kember & Gow, 1994). Kember (1997) integrating results of 13 recent studies on college/university instructors' approaches to teaching, distinguished five approaches. Figure 1 presents these approaches and the way each formulates the role of the teacher, teaching, and students.

Insert Figure 1 About here

Kember arranged four of these five approaches to teaching under two orientations that may be viewed as the two poles on a continuum: teacher-centered/content oriented (approaches 1 and 2) and student-centered/learning oriented (approaches 4 and 5). The teacher-centered orientation focuses upon the communication of defined bodies of content or knowledge whereas the student-centered orientation focuses upon students' knowledge rather than that of the lecturers. The student-teacher interaction is regarded as a transitional approach between the two teaching orientations.

---

enables them to apply it matches Hativa's second-in-importance goal of promoting student ability to apply methods and principles.

3. Faculty Perceptions of Students as Learners and of the Responsibility for Student Learning

Kember's analysis indicates that faculty's perceptions of their students ranges from being passive recipients of information—in the teacher-centered orientation—to being individuals with various needs, who want to think, be intellectually challenged, and be active in the learning process—in the student-centered orientation. An important issue in the context of teaching approaches is the responsibility for student learning. In Kembers' teacher-centered orientation, the student is perceived as a recipient of information who has the main responsibility for learning it. In the more extreme approach of imparting information, students are responsible for their own learning regardless of the way the teacher teaches. Teachers who espouse this belief, who fail to accept responsibility for students' failure to learn, fail to see a relationship between their own behavior and students' learning and thus are less likely to work to improve students' performance in the classroom (Clark & Peterson, 1986). In the student-centered orientation, the teacher is largely responsible for student learning whereas the student's responsibility is smaller. The teacher is in charge of providing an environment that is conducive to learning.

4. Faculty Perceptions of Factors Causing Difficulties in Teaching

Only few studies tried to identify these factors. Choi and Malak (1975) identified several student behaviors that may affect teaching negatively: failure to complete assignments on time, to ask questions in class, and to participate in class discussions. Similar or additional negative student behaviors were identified by Hativa (1997): failure to do the assigned reading, to review previously taught material before the lesson, and to do the homework assignments by oneself, without copying from other students.

Troublesome factors other than student behaviors were: the unavailability of a good textbook; insufficient pedagogical knowledge and lack of training for the teaching profession, students' insufficient background knowledge, and the diversity of the student population (ibid). Institution-related obstacles that decrease faculty motivation to invest in teaching (as perceived by faculty) are (Moses, 1985): A non-supportive climate toward teaching on campus— discouraging attitudes towards

teaching of senior staff and administrators, lack of reward for teaching, heavy teaching load, and high-pressure or strong personal ambition to do research and publish.

Students' Perceptions of the Academic Environment

Students' perceptions of teaching, teachers, and their role as learners affect the way they behave in class, approach studying, and respond to success or failure in course tests.

Students' Approaches to Learning: Categories and Components

Over two decades of research on student learning have produced a substantial literature on learning approaches, which centers on two components: motivation and cognitive strategies. Various taxonomies were suggested of students' approaches to learning. One group of researchers (1979; Biggs, 1976; Entwistle & Tait, 1990; Marton & Säljö, 1976; Ramsden & Entwistle, 1981) distinguished among three main approaches to the study process, each of which includes an affective (motivational) component and a cognitive (strategic) component, with the strategy envisaging the behavioral realization of the motive. These are: (a) *surface approach*, consisting of external motivation and surface learning strategies; (b) *deep approach*, consisting of internal motivation and deep learning strategies; and (c) *organized/strategic approach*, consisting of achieving/competitive motivation and achievement-oriented/strategic-learning strategies. A second group of researchers (Pintrich, Smith, Garcia, & McKeachie, 1991; Schmeck, Geisler-Brenstein, & Cercy, 1991; Weinstein, Zimmermann, & Palmer, 1985) did separate between the motivational and cognitive components of academic performance and developed models for students' approaches to learning based on this distinction. To illustrate, the Motivated Learning Strategies Questionnaire (MLSQ) (Pintrich et al., 1991) is based on a model that consists of a motivation scale with three components: value, expectancy, and affective; and a learning strategies (cognitive) scale with two components: cognitive and metacognitive strategies, and resource management strategies.

Drawing on a number of studies of college student learning, Entwistle's (1995) review concludes that students in different disciplines develop characteristic ways of learning which are based on their perceptions of what is required in their academic

work. Within a particular discipline, effective learning involves the interplay between the characteristics of the student and the learning environment as induced by teacher and department (ibid.). Components of the learning environment such as assessment procedures, workload, freedom in learning, and good teaching as perceived by students strongly affect their learning approaches (Entwistle, 1986).

Students' learning approaches relate to their preferences for academic environment. For example, "Students who adopt deep approaches to learning show a clear preference for an environment which is likely to promote understanding, while those with a surface approach prefer situations which are thought to facilitate rote learning" (Entwistle, 1990, p. 187). Similarly, "students whose main concerns are narrowly vocational want the lecturer to provide only the minimum required to pass the examination, and to present that in the most straightforward way. In contrast, students whose concerns are more academic want to be challenged intellectually, and to be encouraged to read widely to supplement lectures" (Entwistle, 1990, p. 9).

Students' Perceptions of the Responsibility for Learning

An individual's reaction to failure is determined by his/her perception of why the failure occurred. Responsibility for success or failure depends on whether the cause for success or failure is controllable or not (McMillan & Forsyth, 1991). If a person thinks the failure was produced by stable factors that are not easily controlled and modified, such as ability, she will decide that subsequent failures are inevitable, and will probably give up and fail on subsequent tasks. But if the person thinks the initial failure was produced by unstable factors that can be controlled and modified, such as effort, then the person might decide that initial setbacks can be mastered. That is, attributing failure to a controllable rather than an uncontrollable factor should lead to increased success expectancies and increased persistence (Anderson & Jennings, 1980). Students who believe that they have control over their success and failure in learning take responsibility for their learning whereas those who perceive that they do not have that control, put the responsibility for their success and failure on factors outside themselves, particularly on the learning environment—the teacher is not good, the tests are unfair, and so forth.

Congruency and Mismatch between Faculty and Students' Perceptions of the Academic Environment, and Their Effect on Student Learning

Students' preferred teaching styles match teachers' attitudes toward education (Kerlinger, 1966; Kerlinger & Pedhazur, 1968). Students' specific social-psychological needs in learning are related to their ratings of teachers whose style is consistent with their needs (Tetenbaum, 1975). Students' preferred learning style relates to their preferences for teacher communication style (Emanuel & Potter, 1992). Students prefer teaching approaches that best serve their own learning approaches (Hativa & Birenbaum, 2000). All these findings suggest congruency between students' preferences for academic environment and their learning style.

Moreover, several ATI (aptitude-treatment interaction) studies showed that congruency or a match between teaching characteristics or attitudes and students' learning-related characteristics increased students' achievement or satisfaction from instruction. To illustrate, Domino (1968; 1971) showed that students performed better academically and reported greater satisfaction from their studies when taught in a manner consonant with their achievement orientations than when taught in a manner dissonant with these orientations. Pask (1988) showed that when students were matched to a teaching style closely similar to their own learning style, they learned more easily and effectively than students who were mismatched.

Only little research exists on gaps between students' and teachers' thinking and perceptions oncerning the learning environment. Amsel and Fichten (1990) identified differences in college students' and professors' views about the appropriateness of students' request for special consideration in three areas: grading concessions, the role of advice by professors, and students' request for modifications in the professor's teaching style that would facilitate comprehension and learning. In another environment, that of law reviews where students control editing and publication, professors were found to complain about article selection and editing practices whereas students felt burdened with unrealistic expectations. Each party viewed the other as arrogant (Shea, 1995).

Method

The Context[7]

Because the legal profession has a high prestige in Israel, the demand for admission to university law schools far exceeds the number of students these schools can accommodate.[8] This has led to the highest standards for student admission among all university schools, matched only by those of the medical school.[9]

Undergraduate studies in the law school under study take seven 14-week semesters. Almost all courses in the first two years and about one half of the third year courses are required and are two-semester long, with 3-4 weekly hours. A class consists of 350-400 students, divided into three parallel tracks with the same course offerings, so that the same course is taught in the three parallel tracks (each of about 120 students), usually by three different teachers. On the basis of the admission criteria, students are divided into ten aptitude levels and the assignment of students to tracks is done at random, but with maintaining equal aptitude-level distribution for the three tracks. About 15% of the students study also in other university departments, mostly economics or management, for combined undergraduate degree.

The academic staff at the time of study consisted of 38 full-time faculty, with Ph.D.'s from either Israeli or prestigious European and US universities. Almost none of them had practiced law and, similar to most faculty in Israeli research universities, they were mostly involved in research and publishing and none had received any preparation for teaching. Many teachers, too, were adjunct faculty, mostly practicing lawyers and judges. They were teaching mostly elective courses in smaller classes than the required courses.

The required yearlong courses are taught solely by the full-time faculty, each teaching two-to-three courses per semester (of which one-to-two may be electives).

---

[7] Knowledge of the special context of teaching in the school under study is essential for understanding the academic environment and the source of tension between teachers and students. Therefore, it is described in detail here and in the introduction.

[8] There are additional law schools in colleges but their tuition is about twice as high as that in the universities while they are less prestigious.

[9] The admission is based on high performance on high school completion grades and on psychometric tests.

Because of the large number of students in required courses, teaching is almost solely in the lecture mode.

In almost all required courses, students' grades are based on several sets of homework assignments and on two end-of-semester final exams. These exams are mostly open-book/notebook. The typical exam presents several legal cases or situations which students are asked to analyze, then to answer related questions. Because of the large classes, faculty are helped in grading the works by graduate student assistants (GAs). In the optimal case, before evaluating the exam, the teacher develops with his/her GAs an answer key, consisting of a list of points/precedence/ related cases that students should mention in their answer. This list is based on the reading assignments and the lectures' content throughout the semester. The grades are not on curve.

In the perception of the undergraduate students interviewed, the GAs usually graded the test sheets solely by counting the number of standard solution elements mentioned. This method of grading was dubbed by students "school solution", "check lists" or "issue spotting." Students felt that in order to get a decent grade, they should guess the GA's (and professor's) intentions and mention as many of them, while avoiding "irrelevant" points.[10] Students believed that the GAs were insufficiently confident about the material to appreciate original/creative answers that were not included in the answer-key.

A number of students in each course who take studying seriously, who attend most of the classes and do most of the assigned reading, condense all the course material—the essence of the assigned readings and class notes—into a "*summary notebook*", for reference during the final exam. The other students copy one of the several available notebooks[11] and use it when preparing for the exam, and as the source of information during the exam. Students who attend classes very infrequently and who do not do the assigned readings use the summary notebook as almost the sole

---

[10] Jokingly, they called this procedure as "throwing a ball into the basket with eyes folded"

[11] It is an Israeli law-school (and usually higher-education) student tradition to help and share resources in studying.

source for their studies in the course. They usually read it during the last few weeks before the final exam.

Tools

Class Observations

The author observed about 20 required large freshman, sophomore, and junior classes, with 12 different teachers (more than one third of the full-time faculty teaching in that semester). The12 teachers had received of the full range of student ratings— from highest to lowest. The aim of these observations was to better understand the context of teaching and learning in classrooms, given faculty and students' dissatisfaction as presented above.

Observations confirmed that teaching in these large classes was solely in the lecture mode with relatively little discussion or questions from either teacher or students. I was impressed that the better teachers in students' perception, those rated high by students, presented the material in a clear and interesting way, used humor, wrote and drew on the chalkboard more often; posed more questions to students; and conducted more discussions than the other teachers. Except in discussions and when asking questions, students were mostly passive throughout the lesson and many of them frantically wrote notes (on paper or on laptop) trying to keep up with their teacher's speech. Comparing with my observations of classes in other schools, I concluded that the teaching of large classes in this professional school was not substantially different from that in the humanities and at other university departments, particularly in subject areas that did not apply mathematics and where teachers used mainly chalk-and-talk.

Questionnaires

To examine the extent that the findings from the interviews could be generalized to the full population of teachers and students in the law school, two questionnaires were designed with parallel items for teachers and students.

The Questionnaire Items

The items dealt with most issues identified in the interviews but also referred to the relevant research literature. They were designed to answer the research questions.

Perceptions of Goals in Teaching

The first question consisted of a list of 16 goals in teaching, referring to the following three categories (Table 1): (a) developing student thinking, motivation, and professional skills; (b) teaching styles and methods, effective teaching behaviors/ strategies, the issue of theory versus practice; and (c) the role of student assessment.

The professors were asked to refer in their answers to a particular required large course that they taught that year and to rate their perceptions regarding each of the listed goals twice: once on how important it was for them to achieve, and second, on the extent they had succeeded in achieving/applying it in their teaching in that course.

The students, too, were asked to refer to a required course they took that year. However, rather than naming in the form a specific course which would have limited the answers of each class to a single course, students were asked to refer to a single course at their choice, one which they felt best represented the teaching they experienced in the law school and which did not represent extreme case of teaching. Because students may differ on which course they find typical, and because of the large number of student respondents (over 300), the assumption was that most courses in each track would be represented,[12] except those with the best and worst teachers in students' perception. Thus, the result was expected to reflect the perception of all students in the law school about the typical, or most representative, teaching they have experienced.

Similar to the form for faculty, the plan was to ask students to rate each goal twice, once on how important it was for their learning, and second, on the extent they felt their teachers succeeded in achieving/applying it in their teaching. Unfortunately, the dean and vice dean of the law school, who evaluated and modified the questionnaire items before the form was administered, were concerned about the time

[12] See below description of questionnaire administration.

that administering the longer questionnaire would take off class time in the last week of the academic year, and requested removal of the question on goal importance.

Perceptions of the Responsibility for Student Learning

This issue is examined by two questions (Table 2). The first, direct question explicitly asks faculty and students to rate their agreement with each of two answers to the question—"Who is responsible for student learning?" (a) the instructor who should take care to provide good teaching and support and help students in their learning, and (b) the students who should study the course material regardless of the quality of instruction provided to them. The second question indirectly relates to the same issue by inquiring who is to be blamed for students' failure in learning in the course—they themselves or the teacher. The question lists four problematic student behaviors (surface/superficial learning, absence from class lessons, not doing the required readings for class, and studying only at the end of the course from a "summary notebook") and two problematic teacher behaviors (poor/ ineffective teaching, improper procedures for testing and grading). Students and faculty were asked to rate the contribution of each of these problematic behaviors to students' poor grades or test failure.

Perceptions of problems in instruction

These problems were divided into those that related to students' behaviors and those related to other sources. Faculty and students were asked to rate their agreement whether or not students actually exhibited these behaviors (Table 3).

The population

The questionnaire forms were administered to all full-time faculty members and to a random sample of students. The administration to students took place in the last week of the academic year (1997-8) for two reasons: (a) to give freshman students sufficient time to have experienced and developed their perception of teaching in the school, and (b) to gain a high response rate. Experience has shown that in the last week class attendance is higher than in all previous weeks because many low-attending students come to class to get information about the final exam.

Faculty respondents: Of the full-time faculty, eight of thirty eight did not teach in the semester studied (mostly were on leave). Twenty one of the 30 active instructors (67%) filled out the forms. These were 19 (of 26) men and two (of four) women. Their teaching experience was as follows: two respondents, between one and two years; five, between three and five years; two between six and ten years; two between 11 and 20 years, and ten veteran faculty had been teaching in the school for over 20 years. Six respondents were untenured lecturers, four were tenured senior lecturers, seven were associate professors and four full professors.

Student respondents: The seniors completed their studies in the first semester and thus did not participate in the study. For each one of the first three years, one track was selected at random to receive the forms. The questionnaire was initially answered by 90 freshmen, 61 sophomores, and 84 juniors. Because of the low attendance in the sophomore class, the questionnaire was administered to an additional sophomore track. This time 80 students responded. The answers of the two samples were compared and since hardly any significant differences were found on the items, they were combined into one single sample, including 141 students. Altogether the population included 29% freshmen, 44% sophomores, and 27% juniors, consisting of 47% males and 53% females.

Results

The results under each heading are arranged in decreasing order of mean ratings in the left most column (presenting the teachers' perceptions of goal importance).

Aim 1: Goals in Teaching and Student Assessment

Faculty and Students' Perceptions of the Listed Goals

Table 1 presents faculty and students' ratings of the 16 listed goals, arranged under three main categories related to the three first research questions. In the original questionnaire form, items belonging to the different categories were presented in mixed order. Table 1 also presents results of t-tests comparing the ratings of the two groups of respondents. To compensate for the cummulative effect of using numerous

statistical tests, the statistical significance per category is computed using α/n with n being the number of items in the category.

Insert Table 1 About Here

(a) Faculty perceptions of their most important goals in teaching

Of the 16 listed goals, four are perceived by faculty as of utmost importance.[13] Three of those belong to the category of developing students: encouraging students' openness to a variety of opinions and values, developing their theoretical legal thinking, and promoting their creative and original thinking. A fourth goal in this category—promoting students' independent learning—is rated high. All goals that belong to method of instruction are rated high, one of them rates very high—that attending class will give added value beyond reading the required texts. The two goals in student assessment, and the goal of in-depth teaching rather than superficial curriculum coverage, are rated as of high importance. Of special interest are the two goals rated low or very low on importance. Both belong to the category of theory versus practice. They suggest that faculty reject the notion that they should concentrate on the practice of law rather than on theory. This faculty perception is supported by the very high ratings assigned to the goal of promoting theoretical legal thinking.

(b) Faculty perceptions of their success in achieving/applying their goals in teaching

Out of the 16 goals in teaching, there is not even a single one that faculty feel they achieve to a very high extent, and there are only five-they feel they achieve successfully enough—those related to the added value of attending class, to enabling students to ask questions during class, to teaching in depth, and both goals in student assessment. All other goals are achieved at lower levels.

---

[13] A rule of thumb (Hativa, 1995) that is used in the following tables, roughly interprets the mean ratings on a scale from 1 to 5 as follows: (a) below 2.9—very low; (b) 3.0-3.4 low; (c) 3.5-3.9 medium; (d) 4.0-4.4 high; and (e) 4.5-5.0 very high.

(c) Students' perceptions of their teachers' success in achieving the listed goals

In students' perceptions, none of the 16 listed goals is achieved at a satisfactory level in actual teaching . Only one goal is achieved at the medium-high level—enabling student to ask questions during lecture. Ten goals are achieved at the medium, medium-low, and low level, and notably, five goals are achieved at the very low level.

Comparing Faculty and Students: Results of t-Tests

Comparing (a) and (b)

The gap between the stated importance of faculty goals in teaching and the extent they succeed in actually achieving them in their perceptions is statistically significant for 10 of the 16 goals. The gap is large particularly for all goals that are of utmost importance to the faculty and for the majority of those of high importance to them. For the six goals on which there are no significant differences, we may interpret this to mean that faculty believe they succeed in achieving these goals.

Comparing (b) and (c)

Table 2 reveals that for all 16 goals, with no exceptions, the students' ratings are lower than those of the faculty. The gap between faculty and students' ratings is statistically significant for nine of these goals. The differences are particularly large on the goal of very high importance: "Class attendance will have added value", and on three goals of high importance: supporting students in their learning, promoting knowledge for professional work, and that tests examine learner's independent thinking. However, faculty and students seem to agree on the low extent of realization of two goals highly regarded by faculty ("Promoting student ability for independent study", and "Promoting active discussion in class"), and on two other goals at the medium-low and low- importance level.

Aim 2: Assumed Responsibility for Student Learning by Faculty and Students

Table 2 presents the results for two items that directly gauged the responsibility for student learning, and six items that investigated the same but indirectly.

Insert Table 2 About Here

Table 2 reveals that when the question of responsibility was asked directly and explicitly, both faculty and students put the main responsibility with the teacher. Faculty assume this responsibility at a significantly higher extent than the students credit them with. Both faculty and students assign students responsibility for their learning only to a low extent. Interestingly, faculty relate their own versus students' responsibilities in a different way than the students. For faculty, no connection between the two items was found ($r=0.20$, $p>0.05$), that is, they do not connect between their and the students' responsibilities. In contrast, for students there is a negative connection ($r=-0.28$, $p<0.001$), that is, they perceive their and faculty responsibilities as conflicting—with one coming on account of the other. Z-test on the difference between both populations on this issue is almost statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($z=1.91$, $p=0.056$).

When the question on responsibility is asked indirectly, faculty rate reasons related to the students at the high or medium range and they rate low those reasons related to themselves as teachers. In contrast, students rate reasons related to themselves, one in the medium range (surface learning) and the other three in the low or very low range, whereas they rate reasons related to teachers in the medium-high range. The differences between faculty and students' ratings on each of the six reasons are statistically significant.

3. Perception of Students' Problematic Behaviors

Seven problematic student behaviors were rated by faculty and students on the extent of their existence and of their posing problems in teaching. Table 3 presents the summary of these ratings and a comparison of faculty and students' perceptions.

Insert Table 3 About Here

Surprisingly, in contrast with the significant gaps in faculty and students' perceptions on the previous two aims of the study, faculty and students show a high level of congruency regarding all items describing students' problematic behaviors. Both groups strongly agree that students come unprepared to class and that they show

low class attendance. Both reveal medium- to medium-low agreement that students overwrite in their notebooks and do not bring necessary reading materials to class, and both reject the assumption that students are not interested in learning theory, in thinking, and in being intellectually challenged, or that they do not participate in or attend to class discussions.

Summary and Discussion Related to the Aims of This Study

Following is a discussion of the main results.

Aim 1: Perceptions of Teaching Goals

Goals in Developing Students

Faculty see it as their top priority in teaching to develop students, that is, to encourage their openness to a variety of opinions and values, to promote their aptitudes and thinking skills in the legal profession, to help them be creative, original, and innovative, and to advance their ability to self-study. This finding agrees with existing research literature indicating, as above, that one of the three most important goals for faculty in a variety of higher education institutions is developing students' higher-order cognitive skills and their independent and critical thinking.

Very remarkably, in faculty's own perception, they fail to a large extent in actually achieving the very goals that are the most important for them. This may have an obvious explanation—faculty do not have exclusive or direct control over students' development. There are intervening variables such as students' aptitudes, motivation, and approaches to studying (surface, deep, and strategic, as above) that are likely to reflect in significant differences between student development goals and their actualization. Students' perception of faculty's failure to promote their development shows to be significantly larger than that of faculty.

Goals in teaching style/method

Faculty aspire highly to achieve all goals regarding teaching methods or styles, that is, to support students in their learning and to provide effective instruction which is clear and organized so that attending class would have value beyond reading the

texts. Indeed, in their perception, faculty do achieve these goals, although to a lower extent than desired.

Students' ratings fully supports the finding from students' interviews: they perceive class teaching as having no added value beyond reading texts, as mostly ineffective, with low organization and clarity, and encouraging or supporting of their learning only to a small extent.

Teaching theory versus practice. In complete support with the faculty and student interviews, faculty strongly reject orienting their teaching towards professional preparation and rather prefer a more academically-oriented theoretical approach. They feel that they teach more practical approach than they should. However, in students' view, faculty do not at all orient their teaching to the practice of law but mostly concentrate on theory. In essence, the tension between teaching theory versus teaching practice revealed here can probably be found to varying extents in any medical, engineering, or teacher education program. It is a conflict built into any professional education that is based on both theory and research, as already observed by Shulman (1998, pp. 11-12):

> The claims of a theoretical knowledge base set up a tension that is endemic in every form of professional education I know. That is the theory-practice tension... it is probably, in principle, not resolvable. It is in the nature of a profession to be caught in this tension between knowledge of the general and the universal, and knowledge of the particular and the situated.

Goals in assessing students

In assessing students, faculty aspire to examine knowledge of the material as well as independent thinking, and they believe that they do achieve these goals. However, students strongly believe that faculty fail in achieving both these goals. This confirms students' extreme condemnation of methods of assessment, as identified in the interviews above.

All goals

This study examines perceptions of teachers and students belonging in the same law school so that both parties refer to the same teaching/learning situation-the same academic environment. The study reveals major gaps between faculty and students' perceptions of key issues related to all aspects of that academic environment. It

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

suggests there exists a serious tension between students' and faculty expectations and goals regarding the teaching/ learning process in that school. There is a substantial discrepancy between faculty's most important teaching goals and their beliefs regarding how successful they are in achieving these goals, and a further discrepancy between faculty beliefs regarding how successful they are in achieving their goals and students' perceptions of this success.

The gap between the desired and achieved in faculty perceptions can be explained by faculty's lack of control of what students do outside class—that is, what and how they study at home. Another explanation may be that faculty classroom behavior is determined by factors other than their abstract goals which may hinder the materialization of these goals. Indeed, most people, when asked to describe principles that guide their action, describe their "espoused theory" which often contrasts sharply with their "theory in action", which can be inferred from their observed actual behavior (Argyris & Schon, 1974). The gap identified may explain faculty's great frustration, as exposed in their interviews above.

But the even larger gap is between faculty and students, in perceptions of faculty success in achieving their most important teaching goals. This suggests that faculty overestimate the beneficial effects of their teaching on student learning and satisfaction. As other studies also show, faculty members are usually unaware of their problems in teaching and tend to simply consider themselves good teachers (e.g., Feldman, 1989). For example, Blackburn et al. (1980), in a survey of about 2,000 faculty at 24 institutions, show that about 90% of the faculty judge themselves as above average or superior teachers. Berman and Skeff (1988), in a survey of faculty in a research university, found that about 75% of them rate their lecturing ability as either very high or high. Similarly, Cross (1988, p. 10) found regarding faculty that "An amazing 94% rate themselves as above-average teachers, and 68% rank themselves in the top quarter on teaching performance." The results of all these studies contradict what could be expected from a statistically normal distribution of ratings, which would show only about 50% of the population rating above the statistical average. Altogether, these repeated findings support the finding of this study that faculty have a high sense of self-competence for teaching which is not totally grounded in reality.

Students' perceptions that faculty fail to achieve many of their key goals regarding teaching and students lead to student frustration and to problematic student behaviors, as agreed upon by both parties. These students' perceptions lead particularly to the substantial and steady decrease in level of preparedness for class and in class attendance, throughout the years of study in the law school at hand. If students feel that teaching in most courses is not too effective; that their motivation, thinking, and professional skills are not stimulated during lessons; that the teachers do not care for them and their learning and do not support or guide them in their learning, and that sitting in class does not add much value beyond reading at home, then why bother to come to class? Thus, they vote with their legs. We may interpret this gap in the conceptual framework of business administration: students behave like consumers who expect "value" for the money and time they spend in the classroom. Consumer expectations relate to levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction of service quality. Thus, students' satisfaction with the quality of teaching is determined by the difference between their expectations and perceptions. As in the business world, discrepancies tend to occur between expectations and perceptions of providers and consumers, and the identification of these gaps is the starting point for effective changes in service (Narasimhan, 2000).

Aim 2: Perceptions of the responsibility for student learning

When asked explicitly, both faculty and students put the main responsibility for student learning on the teacher, with only low responsibility on the students. However, when asked implicitly, each of the parties puts the blame for student failure in learning on the other. Faculty point their finger at students' problematic behaviors: at their superficial learning, coming unprepared to class, and low class attendance, whereas students blame the low quality of teaching and inappropriate testing and grading method. The gaps between faculty and students on all these issues are highly significant statistically. Thus, we may conclude that, generally, faculty deny their role in students' low success or failure in the course and blame it on the latters' problematic behaviors whereas students feel the other way around.

Faculty's denial of responsibility was found also in other studies (Hativa, 1995; Smith, 1995): the students, faculty claim, aren't ready, aren't motivated, are lazy, are

too heterogeneous, are too many, or want to be spoon-fed. Stevens (1988, p. 72) also described professors who "put the burden for learning squarely on the shoulders of the students. They do the teaching (presenting the material) and when students don't learn, it is either because they didn't work hard enough or they were just not bright enough."

Students' implicit denial of own responsibility for failure in learning contradicts the literature above that suggests this type of behavior is typical for students who attribute failure to uncontrollable factors. Students in this school were admitted to study on their proven success in prior learning. Thus, they should believe in the role of effort and persistence in achieving success.

Aim 3: Problems in Students' Behaviors

In contrast with all previous findings, there is large congruency in faculty and students' perceptions concerning the listed problematic student behaviors, particularly lack of preparation and low class attendance. These two behaviors were also noted in the faculty and students' interviews above. Some of the problems on whose existence both parties agree, particularly students' coming unprepared to class, have been identified in previous studies, as above. However, other problems identified in those studies as well as in the interviews for this study, particularly those related to students' insufficient participation in class discussions and their lack of wish to think and be intellectually challenged, are rejected here by both faculty and students.

Conclusions and Implications

Several conclusions and implications can be derived from this study, in addition to those related to the original aims of the study.

Faculty Approaches to Teaching

The goals that appear to be the most important to faculty (e.g., teaching effectively, developing students, supporting them in their learning, demonstrating care for them, teaching in-depth rather than superficially covering the material, assuming main responsibility for student learning) indicate that faculty aspire, and believe they succeed, to teach under three approaches: *transmitting structured knowledge, student-teacher interactions, and facilitating understanding*, those numbered 2-4 in Kember's (1997) classification (Figure 1).

In contrast, in the students' view, the ruling orientation of teaching at that school is teacher-centered, mostly with an *information imparting* approach to teaching, numbered 1 in Kember's categories. In this approach, the teacher covers material superficially rather than teaching less material but in depth, and does not care to develop the students—their thinking and skills for independent learning—or to provide effective teaching and motivate students to learn. This students' perception is supported by faculty implicit beliefs identified in this study regarding shirking responsibility for students' problems in learning or for their failures, rather passing the bucket. Putting the responsibility for success in learning on the students, regardless the level of teaching provided, points on a teacher-centered orientation to teaching, and particularly on the information-imparting approach. Thus, we see here not only the external features of this teaching approach, as observed in classrooms, but also that this approach is deeply embedded within teachers' thinking and beliefs.

Students' Approaches to Studying

As suggested in the literature review above, students' perception of teachers and teaching and their interpretations of the academic environment affect their approaches to studying most directly. The present study nicely demonstrates this notion. It shows how those students who start their learning in this school with a deep study approach, high expectations and enthusiasm for learning find themselves literally forced to change their approach to surface learning by the "Method" or "System" as they call it, that is, by the academic environment.

As revealed from the students' interviews and questionnaires, students with deep approach to learn come to study in the law school with a strong desire to invest in deeply understanding and commanding the material, to attend all classes, to do all the required reading to each class, to participate in class discussions, to raise questions, to think, and to be intellectually challenged. However, through a gradual process that starts already in their very first semester, they discover that their expectations are not fulfilled. They find out that they cannot satisfy the overload of reading for each lesson, that the material is primarily covered in a superficial manner, that the teaching they get is often unclear, disorganized and boring, that any creative independent and innovating thinking and openness to a variety of opinions and values are discouraged, and that

their teachers do not help or guide them in their learning. Altogether, attending class hardly adds anything to just reading the required texts. Learning shallowly from a "summary notebook" enables them to achieve at least the same grades as one would achieve by learning deeply, attending all classes and doing the readings for each lesson.

These converted deep-to-shallow learners are very bitter and frustrated by this forced/compelled process.

The School's Academic Environment

The previous sections demonstrate the crucial effect of a school's academic environment on faculty and students. The study reveals how the following factors form a school teaching culture/academic environment that negatively affects teacher and students' satisfaction and student learning: the structure of courses (proportion of required versus elective, large versus small); the type of exams; the way they are graded; the high aptitudes and initial high expectations of students; faculty's lack of sufficient pedagogical knowledge, and faculty's expectations and beliefs related to students, teaching, and learning.

Effects of the Gap between Faculty and Students' Perceptions of the Academic Environment on Student Learning

As suggested in the literature above, a mismatch between both parties' perceptions of the academic environment negatively affects students' learning. Findings of this study provide further evidence to this notion.

Implications for Practice

The results of this study suggest that university schools and departments should examine faculty and students' perceptions of the academic environment to identify gaps between perceptions. In the case of large gaps, major efforts should be made to reduce them. A first step could be to make each party aware of the perceptions of the other. Then each party should modify its perceptions accordingly. Regarding students, the largest contributor to student learning gains at the postsecondary level is the effort they put into their work, and following this their perceptions of their responsibility for learning (Pace, 1988). Thus, students should probably increase the amount of effort

they put into learning and should take on the full responsibility for their learning. However, this article concentrates on the teacher. The attempt should be made to change university teachers' beliefs regarding their pedagogical knowledge —they should become aware of the need to learn more about effective teaching strategies and be trained and supervised in successfully applying them in the classroom. Faculty should also have the opportunity to consult with or be trained by instructional experts on student-centered approaches to teaching. The methods of student assessment should also be examined. Faculty and students should work together with instructional consultants to devise ways for testing and grading procedures that reflect students' learning in the course as well as their independent and creative thinking. In case of tension related to theory versus practice, faculty should make a point of frequently explaining to students why they emphasize theory at the expense of practice.

Hopefully all this will lead to faculty approaches that are more student-oriented and to instructional improvement in the school. No doubt, the extent of students' problematic behaviors will decrease if these gaps are reduced. If teaching in class is exciting and offers substantial added value, more students are likely to attend classes and prepare themselves better for class. All these may lead to replace surface study with deep learning and to a more pleasant and motivating learning environment.

Generalization of the Findings

Faculty and students' interviews revealed a variety of problems related to the academic environment and a strong tension between faculty and students' perception of this environment. The results of the questionnaire analyses confirmed almost all issues revealed in the interviews. Thus, we may conclude that the results of the interviews of a small sample were generalizable, to a large extent, to the full population of faculty and students in the school under study.

How generalizable are the results of this study to law schools in other universities in other countries? I can suggest only a single example, based on observations that I made in 20 required courses in one of the best law schools in the US. These observations along with interviews with faculty and students of that school revealed similarity to the school of this study in teaching styles (Hativa, 2000), in assessment methods, and in the gap between faculty and students regarding emphasizing theory

versus practice in teaching. This similarity is surprising because of the differences between schools in country, level of education (undergraduate versus graduate), and class size (large, versus medium—30-60 students) and suggests that some generalization can be inferred to other law schools.

What about schools or departments other than law? The following comment was made in a survey by a professor at a prestigious research university in the US (Hativa, 1997): "The grading system encourages students not to study, or study only enough to barely pass. Many of them don't even come to class." This comment demonstrates perceptions regarding students' problematic behaviors and the reasons for these behaviors that are similar to the ones found in this study. This similarity suggests that the failure in achieving goals in student assessment, and that students' problematic behaviors as described above go beyond the particular context of this study. This is probably true for other teaching goals examined in this study. In addition, having observed many classes in a variety of university departments and schools in both Israel and the US, I was impressed that although the overall conditions of the particular law school in this study may be very unique and extreme, the features observed and some aspects of the tension identified here between faculty and students could be found elsewhere too. All aspects of teaching large classes may be experienced in any teaching environment that builds upon a large proportion of required classes attended by a large number of students. The tension between theory and practice identified here may show in any professional school, as already presented above. Thus, the issues discussed here may be relevant, to a certain extent, to many college and university schools and departments.

References

Amsel, R., & Fichten, C. S. (1990). Interaction between college students and their professors: A comparison of students' and professors' views, *College Student Journal* (Vol. 24, pp. 196-208).

Anderson, C. A., & Jennings, D. L. (1980). When experiences of failure promote expectations of success: The impact of attributing failure to ineffective strategies. *journal of Personality, 48*(3), 393-407.

Argyris, C., & Schon, D. A. (1974). *Theory in practice: Increasing professional effectiveness.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Berman, J., & Skeff, K. M. (1988). Developing the motivation for improving university teaching. *Innovative Higher Education, 12*(2), 114-125.

Biggs, J. (1979). Individual Differences in Study Processes and the Quality of Learning Outcomes. *Higher Education, 8*(4), 381-394.

Biggs, J. B. (1976). Dimensions of Study Behavior: Another Look at ATI. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 46*(1), 68-80.

Blackburn, R., Boberg, Q., O'Connell, C., & Pellino, G. (1980). *Project for faculty development program evaluation: Final report.* Ann Arbor: Center for the Study of Higher Education. University of Michigan Michigan.

Choi, J. W., & Malak, J. F. (1975). Faculty perception of poor academic performance of students. *Journal of College Student Personnel, 16*(4), 317-318.

Clark, C. M., & Peterson, P. L. (1986). Teachers thought processes. In M. C. Wittrock (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on Teaching* (Third ed., pp. 255-296). New York: MacMillan Publishing Company.

Cross, K. P. (1988). *Feedback in the classroom: Making assessment matter* (ED299922): AAHE-ERIC/Higher Education Research Report.

Cross, P. K. (1991). College teaching: What do we know about it? *Innovative Higher Education, 16*(1), 7-21.

Dinham, S. M., & Blake, V. M. (1991). *Influences on university teachers' course planning.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago.

Domino, G. (1968). Differential prediction of academic achievement in conforming and independent settings. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 59*, 256-260.

Domino, G. (1971). Interactive effects of achievement orientation and teaching style on academic achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 62*(5), 427-431.

Emanuel, R. C., & Potter, W. J. (1992). Do students' style preferences differ by grade level, orientation toward college and academic major? *Research in Higher Education, 33*(3), 394-414.

Entwistle, N. (1986). *Approaches to Learning in Higher Education: Effects of Motivation and Perceptions of the Learning Environment.*

Entwistle, N., & Tait, H. (1995). Approaches to Studying and Perceptions of the Learning Environment Across Disciplines. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning, 64*, 93-103.

Entwistle, N. J. (1990, May). *How students learn, and why they fail.* Paper presented at the Conference on Talent and Teaching, Bergen.

Entwistle, N. J. (1991). Approaches to learning and perceptions of the learning environment: Introduction to the special issue. *Higher Education, 22*(3), 201-204.

Entwistle, N. J., & Tait, H. (1990). Approaches to learning, evaluations of teaching, and preferences for contrasting academic environments. *Higher Education, 19*, 169-194.

Feldman, K. A. (1989). Instructional effectiveness of college teachers as judged by teachers themselves, current and former students, colleagues, administrators, and external (neutral) observers. *Research in Higher Education, 30*(2), 137-194.

Fox, D. (1983). Personal theories of teaching. *Studies in Higher Education, 8*(2), 151-163.

Franklin, J., & Theall, M. (1992). *Disciplinary differences: Instructional goals and activities, measures of student performance, and student ratings of instruction.* Paper presented at the annual conference of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco.

Gow, L., & Kember, D. (1993). Conceptions of teaching and their relationship to student learning. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 63*(1), 20-33.

Hativa, N. (1995). The department-wide approach to improving faculty instruction in higher education: A qualitative evaluation. *Research in Higher Education, 36*(4), 377-413.

Hativa, N. (1997). *Teaching in a research university: Professors' conceptions, practices, and disciplinary differences.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.

Hativa, N. (1998). Lack of clarity in university teaching: A case study. *Higher Education, 36*(3), 353-381.

Hativa, N. (2000). Teaching large law classes well--An outsider's view. *Journal of Legal Education, 50*(1), 95-111.

Hativa, N., & Birenbaum, M. (2000). Who prefers what? Disciplinary differences in students' approaches to teaching and learning styles. *Research in Higher Education, 41*(2).

Hughes, J. A. (1990). *The teaching theories of community college faculty.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education.

Kember, D. (1997). A reconceptualisation of the research into university academics' conceptions of teaching. *Learning and Instruction, 7*(3), 255-275.

Kember, D., & Gow, L. (1994). Orientations to teaching and their effect on the quality of student learning. *Journal of Higher Education, 65*(1), 58-74.

Kerlinger, F. N. (1966). Attitudes toward education and perceptions of teacher characteristics: A Q study. *American Educational Research Journal, 3*, 159-168.

Kerlinger, F. N., & Pedhazur, E. J. (1968). Educational attitudes and perceptions of desirable traits of teachers. *American Educational Research Journal, 5*(4), 543-559.

Lawrence, J. H., & et al. (1990). *A Comparison of Teaching Goals, Assumptions, and Practices of Faculty in Eight Liberal Arts Disciplines.* Paper presented at the ASHE Annual Meeting Paper.

Marton, F., & Säljö, R. (1976). On qualitative differences in learning II - Outcome as a function of the learner's conception of the task. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 46*(1), 115-127.

McMillan, J. H., & Forsyth, D. R. (1991). What theories of motivation say about why learners learn. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning, 45*, 39-52.

Moses, I. (1985). Academic development units and the improvement of teaching. *Higher Education, 14*(1), 75-100.

Murray, H. G. (1997). Effective teaching behaviors in the college classroom. In R. P. Perry & J. C. Smart (Eds.), *Effective teaching in higher education: Research and practice* (pp. 171-203). New York: Agathon Press.

Narasimhan, K. (2000). Using students' ratings of teaching for diagnostic feedback: A novel approach. *Instructional Evaluation and Faculty Development, 19*(1), 1-10.

Pace, C. R. (1988). *Measuring the quality of college student experiences*. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation.

Pask, G. (1988). Learning strategies, teaching strategies and conceptual or learning style. In R. R. Schmeck (Ed.), *Learning styles and strategies* (pp. 83-100). NY: Plenum Press.

Perkins, D. N. (1992). Understanding performances. In D. N. Perkins (Ed.), *Smart schools: From training memories to educating minds* (pp. 75-79). New York: The Free Press.

Perkins, D. N. (1998). What is understanding. In M. S. Wiske (Ed.), *Teaching for understanding: A practical framework*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Pintrich, P. R., Smith, D. A. F., Garcia, T., & McKeachie, W. J. (1991). *A manual for the use of the motivated strategies for learning questionnaire (MSLQ)*. Ann Arbor, MI: National Center for Research to Improve Postsecondary Teaching and Learning.

Ramsden, P. (1979). Student Learning and Perceptions of the Academic Environment. *Higher Education, 8*(4), 411-427.

Ramsden, P. (1992). *Learning to teach in higher education*. London: Routledge.

Ramsden, P., & Entwistle, N. J. (1981). Effects of Academic Departments on Students' Approaches to Studying. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 51*(3), 368-383.

Schmeck, R. R., Geisler-Brenstein, E., & Cercy, S. P. (1991). Self-concept and learning: The revised inventory of learning processes. *Educational Psychology, 11*(3-4), 343-362.

Shea, C. (1995). Students vs. Professors. *Chronicle of Higher Education, 41*(38), 33-34.

Shulman, L. S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review, 57*(1), 1-22.

Shulman, L. S. (1998, February). *Teaching and Teacher Education Among the Professions*. Paper presented at the 50th Annual Meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), New Orelans, LA.

Smith, R. A. (1995). Reflecting critically on our efforts to improve teaching and learning. In E. Neal (Ed.), *To Improve the Academy* (Vol. 14, pp. 5-25). Stillwater, OK: New Forums Press.

Stark, J. S., & Lattuca, L. R. (1994). Diversity among disciplines: The same goals for all? *New Directions for Higher Education, 84*, 71-86.

Stevens, E. (1988). Tinkering with teaching. *Review of Higher Education, 12*(1), 63-78.

Tetenbaum, T. J. (1975). The role of student needs and teacher orientations in student ratings of teachers. *American Educational Research Journal, 12*(4), 417-429.

Thielens, W., Jr. (1987). *The disciplines and undergraduate lecturing.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington, D.C.

Trigwell, K., Prosser, M., & Taylor, P. (1994). Qualitative differences in approaches to teaching first year university science. *Higher Education, 27*, 75-84.

Weinstein, C. E., Zimmermann, S. A., & Palmer, D. R. (1985). College and university students' study skills in the USA: The LASSI. In G. d'Ydewalle (Ed.), *Cognition, information processing, and motivation* (pp. 703-726). Amsterdam: Elsevier Science Publishing.

Figure 1[14]: Faculty Approaches to Teaching and their Conceptions of the Academic Environment

Approach to Teaching	Teacher Role	Teaching	Student Role
1. Imparting information	Presenter	Information transfer	Passive recipient
2. Transmitting structured knowledge	Presenter	Transfer of well structured information	Recipient
3. Student-teacher interactions	Presenter and tutor	Interactive process	Participant
4. Facilitating understanding	Facilitator	Helping students to learn	Teacher responsible for student learning
5. Conceptual change/ Intellectual development	Change agent/ developer	Development of person and conceptions	Teacher responsible for student development

[14] A modification of Table 2 in Kember (1997).

Table 1: Faculty Versus Student Perceptions Regarding Goals in Teaching: Means, Standard Deviations, and t-Tests

		Teachers (n=21)					Students (n=322)		
		(a) Importance		(b) Application			(c) Application		
	Range	M	SD	M	SD	t-value[1]	M	SD	t-value[2]
Goals in developing students						α/5			α/5
a. Encourage openness to a variety of opinions and values		4.67	0.58	3.58	0.77	7.32****	3.04	1.11	2.08
b. Develop theoretical legal thinking	VH	4.62	0.59	3.72	0.58	6.19****	3.08	1.08	2.51*
c. Promote the ability to think in a creative, original and innovative way		4.57	0.51	3.11	0.88	7.10****	2.58	1.05	2.13
d. Promote the ability for independent learning	Hi	4.24	0.77	3.11	0.88	5.33****	2.93	1.07	0.72
e. Promote interest in and motivation for learning in the law school	Md	3.43	1.29	3.29	0.99	1.82	2.40	1.03	3.47**
Goals in style/method of teaching									
Effective teaching						α/5			α/5
1. Teach so that attending class has added value beyond reading	VH	4.67	0.58	4.00	0.65	4.68***	2.80	1.11	4.77****
2. Enable students to ask questions during lecture		4.43	0.60	4.25	0.64	2.03	3.73	0.89	2.54*
3. Support students in learning (encourage, help, guide, show care)		4.33	0.80	3.85	0.99	3.56**	2.18	1.09	6.70****
4. Promote active discussion in class	Hi	4.19	0.60	3.65	0.49	3.58**	3.28	1.03	1.58
5. Teach in a clear and organized way		4.14	0.79	3.65	0.99	3.58**	3.06	1.07	2.43
Curriculum coverage						α/2			α/2
6. In-depth rather than superficial coverage	Hi	4.14	0.96	4.00	0.67	0.62	3.29	0.98	3.14**
7. Cover a major part of the body of legal knowledge (most of rules, statues, etc.)[3]	Md -Lo	3.19	0.81	3.63	0.76	-1.56	3.43	0.91	0.92
Theory versus practice						α/2			α/2
8. Promote knowledge for professional work (lawyering)	Lo	2.71	1.19	3.24	0.83	-1.17	2.06	0.96	4.94***
9. Concentrate on practice rather than on theory	VL	1.95	0.89	2.75	1.24	-3.00*	2.35	1.04	1.47
Goals in assessing student performance						α/2			α/2
i. Examine knowledge of most of the material presented in the course	Hi	4.15	0.59	3.84	0.83	2.88*	3.04	1.00	3.44***
ii. Examine learner's independent thinking		3.90	1.02	4.00	1.24	-0.32	2.88	1.07	4.28****

[1] Paired t-test between importance and success in applying in class, as perceived by the teacher. To adjust the probability to n items per category, α is divided by n.
[2] Group t-test for faculty versus students' perceptions regarding goal application.
[3] Results of this item should be reversed.

Table 2: Faculty Versus Student Perceptions

Regarding Responsibility for Student Learning and Problematic Behaviors

		Teachers N=21		Students N=322		
	Range	M	SD	M	SD	t-value
The responsibility for students' success in learning in the course:						α/2
1. The teacher, who should take care of the good communication of the material and to help students in their learning	VH	4.50	0.61	3.99	0.89	2.52*
2. The students, who should learn the course material with no regard to the quality of teaching	Low	2.95	1.13	3.29	1.12	1.30
Factors contributing to success or failure in the course:						α/6
Reasons related to the students						
1. Surface learning	High	4.33	0.73	3.45	1.10	3.63***
2. Coming unprepared to the lesson		3.95	0.76	2.63	1.18	4.95****
3. Learning primarily from a "summary notebook"	Med	3.76	0.77	2.48	1.03	5.58****
4. Low class attendance		3.67	0.66	2.41	1.06	5.36****
Reasons related to the teacher						
5. Quality of teaching	Low	2.67	1.02	3.58	1.07	3.80***
6. Testing and grading: appropriateness and quality of the test, and of the evaluation and grading		2.65	1.14	3.86	1.04	4.98****

Table 3: Students' Problematic Behaviors: Faculty Versus Students' Perceptions

	Range	Teachers N=21		Students N=322		
		M	SD	M	SD	t-value
1. Coming unprepared to class	VH	4.48	0.60	4.20	0.95	1.31
2. Low class attendance	High	4.05	0.76	3.84	0.97	0.95
3. Overwriting in notebooks	Med	3.67	1.07	3.37	1.07	1.25
4. Not bringing textbook and other necessary printed materials	M-L	3.13	0.89	3.50	1.17	1.25
5. Uninterested in the theoretical material		2.85	1.04	2.91	1.04	0.23
6. Uninterested in thinking and in being intellectually challenged	Low	2.71	1.06	2.73	1.09	0.07
7. Not attending or participating in class discussions		2.57	1.12	2.76	1.12	0.75